

Persons Who Can't Roll Spaghetti Should Wear Bibs, Junior Decided---They Do, and Like Them

By SIGMAN BYRD
The Stroller

FOR 14 YEARS Vincent Navarro watched Houston folk trying to eat spaghetti in 40-inch lengths, and it was a heart-rending spectacle. "They should wear bibs," he often said. But he never said it aloud, because the Del Monico Spaghetti House, at 1804 Louisiana, is an Old-World sort of place where the customer is considered the honored guest of an honorable host instead of just somebody for the waitresses to snap at.



BYRD

"Some of them know how to roll spaghetti on the fork with a soup spoon," Mr. Navarro explained yesterday. "But most of them have a rough time. I once thought of cutting it short, but that would be what you call in Italian non justo. So I went on watching the ladies slopping spaghetti sauce on their \$75 dresses, and the gentlemen spilling red polka-dots on their \$7.50 ties, and I hated it worse than anything.

By and by, Vincent Navarro Jr. come into the business, and he

too would groan quietly to see a pretty girl holding her fork 24 inches over her plate and trying to come up from below at the festooned spaghetti. Because nine times out of 10 the stuff would slop down on her pretty chin and spoil the front of her frock. "You are right," he told his father. "They should wear bibs."

In Assorted Colors

So Vincent Jr. went to a linen supply house and ordered 150 bibs, in assorted colors, to match the women patrons' costumes. When they came, he told the waitresses to tie the bibs around the necks of people who didn't know the soup-spoon trick.

Vincent Sr. was horrified. His customers would be insulted. They would never darken his door again, again.

But he was wrong.

"They love the bibs," he admits

now. "They can spill spaghetti sauce, ravioli, antipasto and even the 1942 Chianti on themselves and not ruin their clothes. That Junior, he is a smart boy."

Knows His Boats

Dude Miller is nobody's fool, either. I ran into Mr. and Mrs. Miller the other day at Boats, Inc., 2109 Milam, where general manager Claud Thomas was trying to sell me a 27-foot twin-screw Correct Craft cabin cruiser for \$8750, complete with chromium-plated boathook.

I asked to see something a little cheaper, and Mr. Thomas said how about an 8½-foot plywood rowboat for \$95? I looked at that, the aluminum canoes, and a snappy little moth boat, a fishing boat that runs all day on a gallon of gasoline, and a cat-top boat with mahogany ribs that

can carry six and weighs only 86 pounds. I was down to surfboards and water skis when I noticed Mrs. Miller admiring the big cruiser.

"Pardon me," I said to her. "Are you thinking of buying this boat?"

Just Wanted Bearing

"Goodness, no," she said. "I only came in with Mr. Miller to buy a propeller-shaft bearing. We have a boat bigger than this one—at least we soon will have."

Mr. Miller, wearing his work clothes, was just concluding negotiations for the propeller shaft. He said, yes, the big cruiser was a nice boat, but his was going to have a galvanized steel hull, instead of wood, and be 12 inches longer, and otherwise be as fancy in every detail as the \$8750 boat, even to having a flying bridge.

"Only," he added, "mine is going to cost about \$1650 complete."

You'll Need Luck

To duplicate Mr. Miller's project, though, other boat enthusiasts will first have to be as lucky as he was and get a 28-foot government surplus steel lifeboat with a Super-4 Universal 50-horsepower marine engine for \$650. Next they will have to be able to read

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the plans and specifications from back numbers of the magazine Rudder, and finally they will have to be handy with tools.

Mr. Miller, of Dude Miller's Auto Repairs, Alabama and Alameda, has six handy men in his shop. "If you're buying that big cruiser," he said, "I'd like to meet you down off the north jetties next spring and we could have a race."

I told him I'd try to make it and went back to have another look at Mr. Thomas' moth boat, which comes with a sail and a 16-foot mast and sells for \$305, f.o.b. Houston.

Scandalized!

An elderly lady whom I sometimes encounter on my rounds of Houston's places of culture and refinement stopped me the other day to say she didn't know what the world was coming to. The University of Houston newspaper, the Cougar, was carrying a regular column of birth announcements, she said.

Scandalized, I went out to the Cougar office, located on the right bank of Cullen Gulch, and found Tom Clark, a staff reporter, writing the birth column, which he calls "Stork Reality."

I looked over his shoulder at a piece of copy in his typewriter. The lead said: "Diana Nicola, a seven-pound, 11½-ounce daughter, was born to Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Kitt Keith, Building 37, Apartment 7, University Village, at 12:14 a.m. Sept. 23, in St. Joseph's Infirmary. The father is a pre-med student, and Diane is the Keith's second child."

"How many more?" I asked.

"Nine this week," Tom said. "Some weeks we have as many as 15 stork realities. It's on account of the GI program. So many of the student veterans are married."

Tom said he had been married a year, but so far had had no occasion to mention his own name in the text of his column. "How is that?" I asked.

"Oh," he said modestly, "I'm only a freshman."